

Hi, my name is Addisyn Herdic, I live in Lebanon, CT. I fully support #HB 5372 An Act Concerning Dyslexia instruction offered in teacher preparation.

I knew I learned differently in 1st grade. I noticed because my peers started making fun of me about my handwriting and spelling. I had a hard time keeping up in writing, math, and reading. Most times I couldn't even decipher my own handwriting. It took 4 years to get intervention started that worked for me. The method that finally worked for me is 1 on 1 Orton Gillingham tutoring. It helped my spelling, reading accuracy, and handwriting skills. At my new school, I meet with my OG tutor frequently for an hour 4-5 times per week and she helps me with all my subjects. Knowing I will have this time with her consistently, and that she completely understands me, is very comforting. I can apply the skills she helps me learn in all my classes.

My experience with public schools was a not a great experience for me. I will say it was a very challenging time for me. I felt separated from my peers because I couldn't learn in the same way. I felt like no one understood me or could help me. I think that if my old school had teachers certified in structured literacy right at the school, I wouldn't have had such a hard time for so long. It would have saved me from a lot of stress and anxiety.

A teacher that has the right materials and education to teach kids like me is life changing for the kids that are dealing with dyslexia. Kids with dyslexia that haven't been diagnosed with it struggle a lot in academics, and socially and emotionally too. They also get teased and beat themselves up for being dumb or stupid, but after they are diagnosed, and someone who has been certified in OG or another evidence based structured literacy method works with them- the child can flourish in the classroom.

A teacher that graduates from a program that teaches evidence based methods for working with kids like me will help to identify kids with Dyslexia sooner. If it had been discovered that I was Dyslexic sooner, and I got evidence-based instruction from then on, then I wouldn't have fallen so far behind. Also, I wouldn't have had years of testing, and years of failed intervention, and maybe I wouldn't have spent so many years wondering why I couldn't read and write like the other kids. Finally, when I got OG tutoring throughout all my subjects, it was such a relief to finally have someone understand and teach me in a way that I can understand. It has been so important for all of my teachers, not just my tutor to understand how I learn, and why I learn that way. In Math it is very hard for me to line up problems and memorizing math facts, in science I have a hard time copying off the board, in history I really struggle to remember dates of

events. In general it makes it hard for me to break down all my assignments and organize myself. On average it takes me much longer to take tests and do my homework.

I think that all teachers should come out of school prepared to identify and teach students that have the most common reading disability. They should know evidence-based methods so they can teach kids like me in the ways that are proven to work. Now that my learning needs are being addressed, I don't feel so different. I have great friends,

and feel more confident. I have started trying different things because I am more confident. Last year I was the first girl to join my school's wrestling team, and I have started barrel racing horses. I am so much more than my dyslexia. Now I like to look at the ways it helps me. Please support HB 5372 so that all kids with dyslexia can get the evidence based instruction that has done so much for me. And so that teachers can know that kids like me are smart.